

REMARKS

By this Amendment, Applicants cancel, without prejudice or disclaimer, claims 19-22, 27, 28, 33, 36, 66, and 71, amend claims 1, 9-11, 13-18, 23, 30, 32, 34, 35, 37, 44, 48, 53-58, and 67, and add new claims 75-81. Accordingly, claims 1-18, 23-26, 29-32, 34, 35, 37-65, 67-70, and 72-81 are pending in this application.

In the outstanding Office Action, the drawings were objected to for failing to show the feature of claim 36; claim 66 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph; claims 1-8, 11, 13, 19-21, 30-35, 44-47, and 58-66 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 3,908,704 to Clement et al.; claims 1-3, 9-19, 30, and 66 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,554,820 to Wendlandt et al.; claims 1-3, 9, 11-13, 19, 20, 22-25, 27, 29-31, 44-46, 53, 57, and 66 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,797,888 to Yoon; claims 1-9, 19, 21-23, 29, 30, 32-35, 37-41, 44-48, and 59-66 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,454,364 to Kruger; claims 1-3, 9, 11-14, 16-19, 30, and 48-52 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,517,477 to Wendlandt; claims 1-3, 9-12, 19, 20, 30, 31, 53-57, and 66 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,332,242 to Chikama; and claims 1-7, 9, 19, 22, 23, 30, 67-70, and 72-74 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,337,733 to Bauerfeind et al. Claims 26, 28, 36, 42, 43, and 71 were indicated as containing allowable subject matter.

Regarding the objection to the drawings, claim 36 has been cancelled, without prejudice or disclaimer. In view of this cancellation, Applicants request that the outstanding drawing objection be withdrawn.

Regarding the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, claim 66 has been cancelled, without prejudice or disclaimer. In view of this cancellation, Applicants request that the outstanding rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, be withdrawn.

Addressing the prior art rejections, independent claim 1, 23, 30, and 67 have been amended to include the aspects of previously pending claims 26, 28, 42, and 71, which were indicated by the Examiner as containing allowable subject matter. In particular, independent claim 23 has been amended to include the aspects of previously pending claims 27 and 28, independent claim 67 has been amended to include the aspects of previously pending claim 71, and claims 1 and 30 have been amended to depend from claim 23. Independent claim 33 has been cancelled.

New independent claim 75 has been amended to include the aspects of previously pending claim 26 and new independent claim 76 has been amended to include the aspects of previously pending claim 42.

In view of the above, Applicants request the allowance of independent claims 23, 67, 75, and 76.

Claims 1-18, 24-26, 29-32, 34, 35, 37-65, 68-70, and 72-74, and 77-81 all depend from one of independent claims 23, 67, 75, and 76, and are therefore allowable for at least the same reasons stated above that claims 23, 67, 75, or 76 are allowable.

In addition, each of the dependent claims recites unique combinations that are neither taught nor suggested by the cited art, and therefore each is also separately patentable.

The Office Action contains characterizations of the claims and the related art with which Applicants do not necessarily agree. Unless expressly noted otherwise, Applicants decline to subscribe to any statement or characterization in the Office Action.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at (202) 408-4157 if the Examiner believes that a discussion would further the prosecution of this application.

Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge any additional required fees to our Deposit Account No. 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

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By:


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